

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
**OFFICE OF THE CLERK**  
**DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**U.S DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND SET TO ROLL OUT  
GROUND-BREAKING ELECTRONIC CASE FILING SYSTEM**

**Baltimore, MD (February 20, 2003)** – The United States District Court for the District of Maryland is pleased to announce the implementation of electronic filing for case-related court documents, making Maryland one of the first federal courts to implement the system.

Scheduled to launch on March 3, 2003, the much-welcomed and anticipated system enables attorneys to submit documents electronically to the U.S. District Court over the Internet. The system allows 24-hour access to file documents over the Internet, provides automatic email notice of case activity, affords the ability to download and print documents directly from the court, and allows concurrent users (multiple parties, judges and court employees) access to the case files.

Effective March 3, 2003, all civil cases, with limited exceptions, will be subject to the electronic filing requirements and procedures unless the presiding judge orders otherwise. Civil cases that have been exempted from the electronic filing requirements at this time include social security appeals, post conviction/habeas corpus matters, cases sealed in their entirety and cases involving pro se plaintiffs.

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Visit the U.S. District Court's Web Site at [www.mdd.uscourts.gov](http://www.mdd.uscourts.gov)

Known as Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF), the system uses standard computer hardware, an Internet connection and a browser, and accepts documents in Portable Document Format (PDF). The system is easy to use, allowing attorneys to prepare a PDF file using standard word processing software. After logging onto the court's web site using a court-issued password, the filer enters basic information relating to the case and document, attaches the document, and then submits it to the court. A notice verifying court receipt of the filing is generated automatically and other parties in the case also automatically receive a filing notification.

According to Judge J. Frederick Motz, who has been overseeing implementation of the project, the court has attempted to assure that the advent of CM/ECF will not disturb existing practices that have been effective in the past. For example, consented-to requests for extensions of time can still be made by letter instead of by formal motion. At the same time, CM/ECF will reduce cost and delay by enabling lawyers and judges to correspond with one another electronically on case-related matters.

The court has also recognized that although CM/ECF enhances the efficiency of communication, most judges (like most lawyers) will continue to want paper copies of motions, memoranda, and other documents they are asked to review and study. Therefore, the court is adopting a rule requiring lawyers to submit to the court a paper copy of any electronically-filed document exceeding 15 pages in length. "We have tried to blend the old and the new," says Judge Motz. "Our goal has been to design procedures that take full advantage of the benefits of new technology while preserving the benefits of years of accumulated wisdom and experience."

There are no added fees for filing documents over the Internet using CM/ECF, though existing filing fees do apply. Public access to the court filings is available, for a fee, through the judiciary's Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) program (<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>) or, at no charge, through computer stations set up in the Clerk's Offices in Baltimore and Greenbelt.

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The new CM/ECF system is a national effort initiated by the federal judiciary to replace a conventional case management system and to expand its capabilities. To date, 10 of the 94 district courts across the country have implemented the new system, as have over half of the bankruptcy courts.

For additional information regarding training opportunities and for attorney registration to use the system, contact Lisa Rosenthal at 301-344-3223 or log onto the District Court's web site at [www.mdd.uscourts.gov](http://www.mdd.uscourts.gov).

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